

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 15369

PASS AGRICULTURE

FODAG

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: FAO, AORG, APER

SUBJ: FAO RECRUITMENT AND PERSONNEL POLICIES

1. VISIT OF LARRY HYER OF AGRICULTURE AND REQUESTS FROM WASHINGTON HAVE PROVIDED A CHANCE TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT WITH A NUMBER OF FAO OFFICIALS. A FEW SALIENT FEATURES ARE OF NOTE.

2. FIRST, THE CENTRAL PERSONNEL OFFICE OF THE FAO IS VERY WEAK. DECENTRALIZATION HAS MOVED PERSONNEL DECISIONS ON PROFESSIONAL STAFF FROM THE CENTER OFFICE TO PERSONNEL OR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER IN EACH DIVISION. EVEN THIS IS BREAKING DOWN WITH SUPERVISORS CULLING HUNDREDS OF FILES FOR QUALIFIED APPLICANT, BECAUSE USE OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL OFFICE WOULD DELAY PROCESS BY A COUPLE OF MONTHS. OTHER OFFICES ARE COMPLETELY AVOIDING FAO PERSONNEL OFFICE IN ORDER TO HIRE A SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL RAPIDLY, FOR EXAMPLE THE OYLER CASE IN WHICH DEPARTMENT OF PROGRAM AND BUDGET WANTED TO HIRE A QUALIFIED AMERICAN QUICKLY. ALL OF THIS WORKS IN RETROGRESSIVE CIRCLE AS FAR AS MORALE AND PERFORMANCE ARE CONCERNED. THE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF REFLECTS SERIOUS EMPLOYEE CONCERN

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ABOUT THE PROBLEM. IT RAN A CRITICAL ARTICLE ON THE SUBJECT IN ITS JUNE-JULY NEWSLETTER UNDER THE TITLE "PICKING OF FAO PROFESSIONALS--WHY NOT THE BEST?" AN APS OFFICIALS SAYS THEY HAVE ABOUT 20 DOCUMENTED CASES OF IMPROPER PERSONNEL ACTION IN THEIR FILES.

3. A MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO LOSS OF INFLUENCE

OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL IS INFLUENCE OF FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE DECIDES ON ALL D-1 AND D-2 POSITIONS AT FAO, BUT NOW DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S INFLUENCE IS BEING FELT DOWN TO THE P-3 LEVEL. HE IS INFORMING THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL OF HIS CHOICE FOR A POSITION AND THEN ASKING HIM TO PUSH IT THROUGH THE IMPARTIAL SELECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE. SOME MEMBERS OF THE LATTER HAVE WALKED OUT IN FACE OF THE ULTIMATUMS. BY AND LARGE THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S SELECTIONS, SUCH AS A. J. LESLIE AND C. FERNANDO, HAVE BEEN COLORED BY OBVIOUS POLITICAL REASONS. IN OTHER CASES, WORD HAS BEEN RECEIVED TO CHOOSE ONE OF THE FIVE CZECH CANDIDATES FOR A FOREST INDUSTRY POSITION, OR HIS HAS INFORMED THE ITALIANS TO PROVIDE CANDIDATES FOR BRONSEMA'S POST, DIRECTOR OF THE FINANCIAL SERVICES DIVISION. THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL HAS, ON CHECKING, BEEN CAREFUL TO AVOID A HARD, NATIONAL COMMITMENT. HE WILL ONLY COMMIT HIMSELF ON A KNOWN CANDIDATE. HE SEEMS TO BE FILLING TOP POSTS FROM COUNTRIES WHO DO NOT HAVE SUCH POSTS. ANOTHER REASON FOR SAOUMA'S PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS-HE WISHES TO BREAK UP SOME OF THE OLD FIEFDOMS LIKE THE UK'S HOLD ON THE INVESTMENT CENTER. HE IS ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR QUALIFIED WOMEN TO FILL TOP POSTS AND IS DISCOURAGED WITH THE LACK OF SUCCESS SO FAR.

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4. MORE APPOINTMENTS ARE GOING TO INTERNAL CANDIDATES. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY THE FAO CAN REWARD GOOD SERVICE. IT ALSO MEANS A STEADY INFLATION OF GRADES SO THAT THE FAO PERSONNEL STRUCTURE IS BECOMING AN UPSIDE-DOWN PYRAMID. THE NEW PROGRAM OF WORK AND BUDGET CONFIRMS THIS TREND WITH INCREASES IN THE NUMBER OF P-5 AND P-4 POSTS AND DECREASES IN THE NUMBER P-3 AND P-2 POSTS.

5. AN ENCOURAGING SIGN IS THE EFFORT BY THE NEW FAO ADMINISTRATION TO PUT ALL EMPLOYEES ON A COMPUTER AND ALSO PUT APPLICANTS ON A CENTRAL COMPUTER SO THAT ALL APPLICANTS TO THE FAO CAN BE QUICKLY SCREENED FOR THEIR QUALIFICATIONS. THIS PROCESS IS ALSO BEING APPLIED TO FIELD PROGRAM JOBS. OTHER POSITIVE PERSONNEL SIGNS ARE EFFORTS BY FAO'S NEW ADMINISTRATION TO SET UP AN ANNUAL PERSONNEL EVALUATION SYSTEM AND TO CREATE AN AWARD AND INCENTIVE SYSTEM.

6. THE FAO DIRECTOR FOR PERSONNEL IS CLEARLY AGAINST NATIONAL PERCENTAGE OF FAO EMPLOYEES. HE, BEING FROM SIERRA LEONE, WISHES TO SEE MANY MORE DEVELOPING COUNTRY

EMPLOYEES. THIS VIEWPOINT COULD EASILY SPREAD.

7. RECOMMENDATION: THE UNITED STATES SHOULD STRESS THE
USE BY THE FAO OF ITS CENTRAL PERSONNEL SYSTEM. THIS
MEANS SUPPORT FOR BETTER PEOPLE IN THE FAO
PERSONNEL SYSTEM AND THE USE OF CUMPUTER INFORMATION
SYSTEMS TO HOLD DATA ON CANDIDATES. IF RECRUITMENT
SHIFTS FURTHER TO POLITICAL TRADING FOR JOBS, THE U.S.
WILL LOSE OUT AND THE PERCENTAGE OF U.S. CITIZENS WILL FALL
BECUASE WE CAN'T COMPETE IN POLITCAL TRADES WITH THE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL AND THE ATMOSPHERE FOR EMPLOYMENT WITH
THE FAO WILL BE SO NEGATIVE THAT WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO
FIND GOOD CANDIDATES.GARDNER

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